

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03939 292359Z

13
ACTION EUR-12

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P R 292251Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1226
INFO USIA WASHDC
ALL AMCONSULS CANADA

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USIA FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OGEN, CA
SUBJECT: MEL HURTIG RE AMBASSADOR ENDERS

REF: OTTAWA 3914

1. HURTIG FINALLY DELIVERED SPEECH CITED REFTEL EVENING SPET. 28
AT A MEETING SPONSORED BY THE OTTAWA CHAPTER OF THE COMMITTEE FOR
AN INDEPENDENT CANADA. IN A HALL WHICH HELD CLOSE TO 300 PEOPLE
MR. HURTIG'S AUDIENCE NUMBERED ONLY BETWEEN 60 AND 70. EMBASSY
PERSONNEL DID NOT ATTEND BUT RELIABLE SOURCES REPORTED HURTIG
DID NOT SPEAK FROM PREPARED TEXT BUT RATHER SEEMED TO BE SPEAKING
FROM NOTES AND ATTEMPTED TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT ALL THE REMARKS
WHICH APPEARED IN THE PRE SPEECH PRESS RELEASE AND TELEVISION
INTEVIEWS WERE ACTUALLY INCORPORATED INTO HIS PRESENTATION.
2. WHEN PUSHED BY REPORTERS IN A QUESTION PERIOD FOLLOWING THE
SPEECH HURTIG ADMITTED THAT AMBASSADOR ENDERS DID IN FACT REFER
TO DIRECT US INVESTMENT IN CANADA WHEREAS HE, HURTIG, WAS
REFERRING TO TOTAL US DOLLAR INFLOW. HE ALSO SAID HUMOROUSLY
WHEN ASKED WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT ENDERS THAT "HE SHOULD BE PUT
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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 03939 292359Z

INTO TH CANADIAN SENATE"; BUT HE LATER WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE

THOUGHT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD RESPOND TO THE AMBASSADOR.

3. ON THE EVENING OF THE 28TH THE OTTAWA JOURNAL BROKE A HURTIG EMBARGO AND RAN A FRONT PAGE STORY ENTITLED "DOWNRIGHT LIAR" - CANADIAN NATIONALIST LASHES U.S. AMBASSADOR". THIS STORY CONTAINED THE SAME CHARGES THAT HURTIG MADE TO WIT AMBASSADOR ENDERS' SPEECHES ARE "FULL OF MISLEADING DISTORTION, LOADED WITH BLATANT INACCURACIES AND DECEPTIVELY ADVOCATING POLICIES DEFINITELY NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CANADA."

4. CBC RADIO COVERAGE MENTIONED THE HURTIG ADDRESS WELL DOWN IN THE NEWSCAST INCLUDING THE FACT THAT HE HAD CALLED THE AMBASSADOR A LIAR. CTV AND CBC TELEVISION ALSO COVERED THE STORY WELL DOWN IN THE NEWSCAST ON THE EVENING OF THE 28TH.

5. MEDIA COVERAGE ON THE 29TH OF THE HURTIG SPEECH WAS LIMITED. THE OTTAWA JOURNAL RAN AN INSIDE STORY, FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF HURTIG'S ACTUAL SPEECH COMMENTS AS DELIVERED.

6. THE OTTAWA CITIZEN RAN A CP STORY HEADLINED "AMBASSADOR CALLED LIAR".

7. THE EMBASSY IN AN EFFORT NOT TO JOIN THE BATTLE WITH HURTIG OR REBUKE HIM PERSONALLY BUT TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT FACTUALLY, ISSUED A STATEMENT CONTAINING STATISTICAL FIGURES SUPPORTING THE POSITIONS THE AMBASSADOR HAS MADE IN HIS EARLIER SPEECHES (SEE OTTAWA'S 3919). THE CANADIAN PRESS INCLUDED PARTS OF THE EMBASSY RELEASE IN A NEW STORY ON HURTIG. CP, THOUGH, NEGLECTED TO INCLUDE NET OUTFLOW STATISTICS FOR DIRECT US INVESTMENT FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1976 AND THE EMBASSY TWICE WAS FORCED TO ASK CP TO RUN CORRECTIONS.

8. CP STORY INCLUDED QUOTE FROM EXTAFF SPOKESMAN DENYING AMBASSADOR WAS LYING.

9. THE EMBASSY'S RELEASE SETTING THE FACTS STRAIGHT WAS IN THE HANDS OF ALL MAJOR NEWS GATHERING ORGANIZATIONS IN OTTAWA BY NOON ON THE 29TH.

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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 03939 292359Z

10. USIS OFFICERS SPENT MUCH OF THE DAY PERSONALLY BACK-GROUNDING NUMEROUS COMMENTATORS IN OTTAWA AS WELL AS IN OTHER CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

11. THE TORONTO STAR MOVED A SHORT SOTRY BASED ON THE HURTIG SPEECH AND THE REMARKS BY AN EMBASSY SPOKESMAN YESTERDAY CITED PARA 3 REFTTEL.

12. COMMENT: GENERAL FEELING IN MEDIA CIRCLES WAS THAT BY ATTACKING THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN SUCH A BLATANT AND PERSONAL FASHIO MEL HURTIG HAS SUCCEDED FINALLY IN CALLING NATIONAL ATTENTION TO HIS STATISTICAL VIEW OF US-CANADIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS -- A FEAT HE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING UNSUCCESSFULLY TO ACHIEVE FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT WAS ALSO SPECULATED THAT HURTIG WAS TRYING TO PUMP SOME LIFE INTO THE DECADENT CIC AND PARTICULARLY TO ATTRACT ATTENTION FOR THE SEPT 28 OTTAWA MEETING. TO THIS END HE WAS NOTABLY UNSUCCESSFUL.

13. MEDIA COMMENTARY CAN BE EXPECTED OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT DAY OR TWO.
ENDERS

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